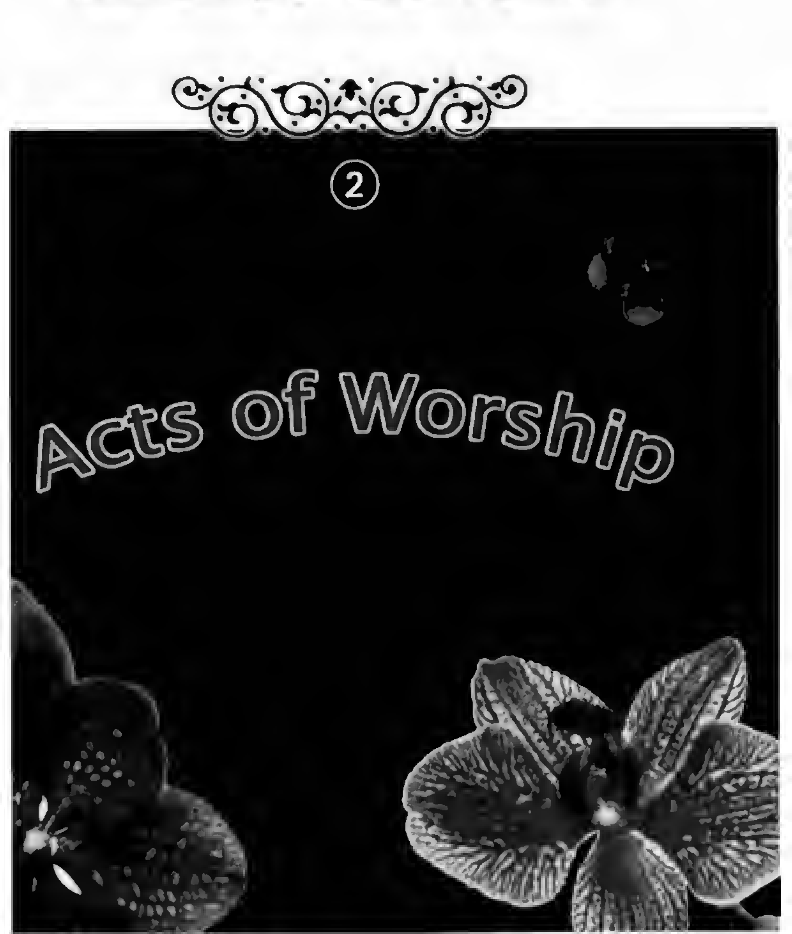
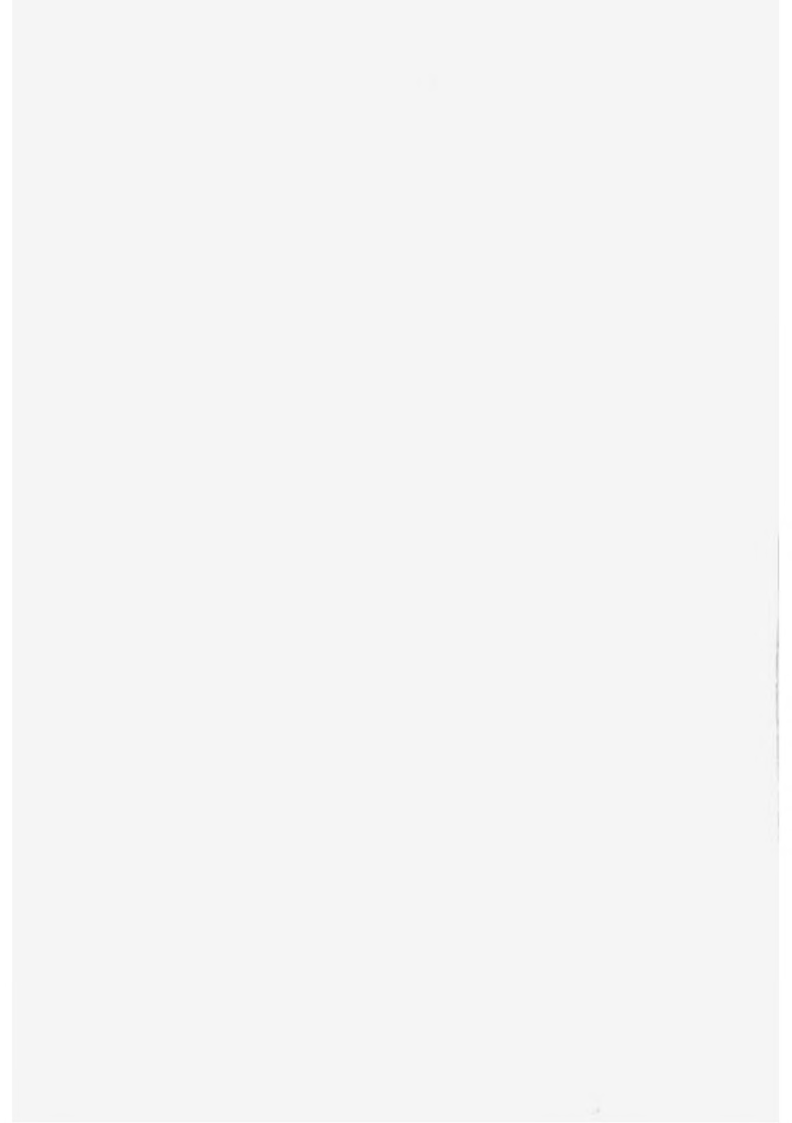
RAISING CHILDREN IN ISLAM

Muhammad Nur ibn `Abd al-Hafizh Suwayd







RAISING CHILDREN IN ISLAM

②

Acts of Worship

البناء العبادي

Muhammad Nur Suwayd

AL-FALAH FOUNDATION

For Translation, Publication & Distribution

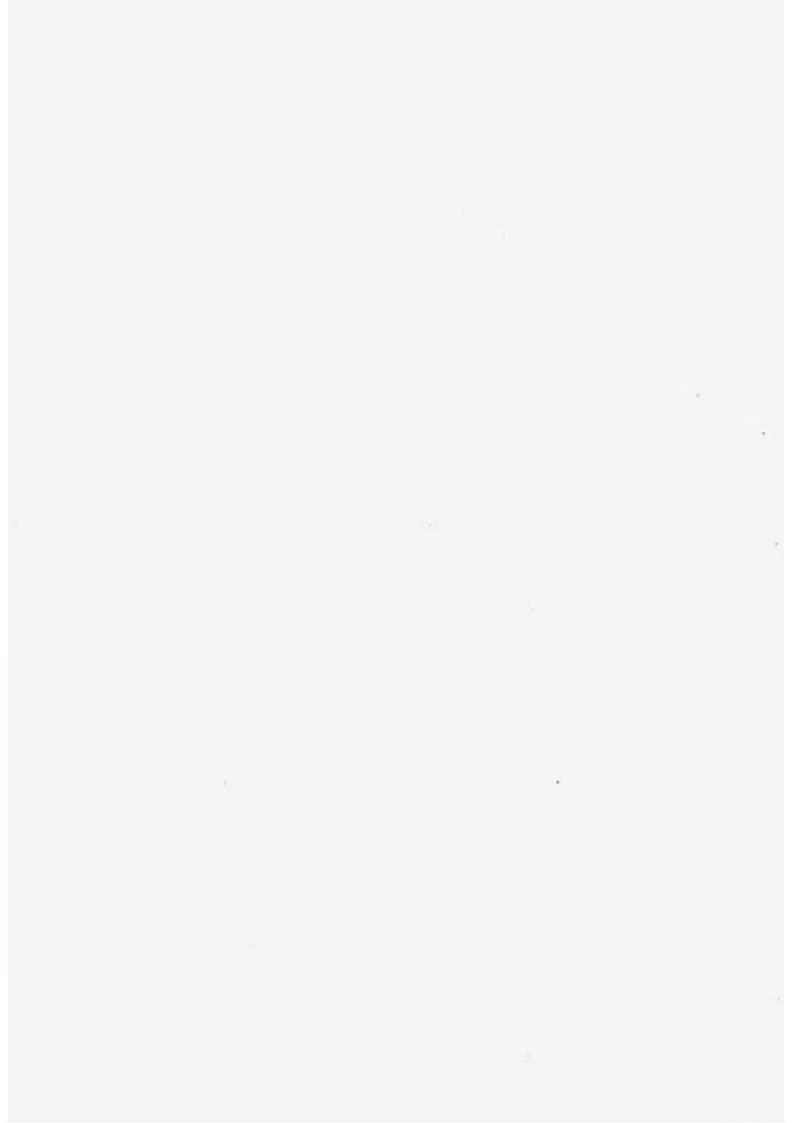
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General director: **Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu**

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Contents



Preface

The Muslim's attachment to the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the strongest among all human relations. Also, he feels that he loves the Prophet (peace be upon him) more than himself and all mankind. Moreover, Almighty Allah states in the Ever-Glorious Qur'an that the Prophet (peace be upon him) is closer to the believers than themselves.

This deep attachment to the Prophet (peace be upon him) is instilled into the hearts and minds of Muslim children at a very young age. He (peace be upon him) is the ideal that every Muslim follows and the source of the great *Shari`ah* that the true Muslim adheres to. He exemplified all that brings us close to Allah or enhances our life. He thoroughly guided us to the extent that greatly surprised the Jews who said that our Prophet has taught us everything.

In this rapidly developing world, Muslim children are faced with enormous challenges in a largely secular environment, and parents are in urgent need of returning to the pure Islamic system.

The author of this precious book exerted great efforts in clarifying the bases of the Prophetic methodology in raising children and how the Prophet guided Muslims to take care of children regarding their creed, acts of worship, physical construction, hygienic constitution and many other aspects. Consequently, the Muslim child will grow into an integrated man that is beneficial to his community.

Al-Falah feels indebted to sheikh Muhammad Nur Suwayd for giving her the chance to present an abridged translation of his valuable work Manhaj *At-Tarbiyah An-Nabawiyyah Lit-Tifl* [The Prophetic Methodology of Child-Raising] in a serial form under the title *Raising Children in Islam* to our English speaking readers all over the world.

Also, Al-Falah appreciates the efforts made by **Nirvan Tal`at** in translating this book. Thanks should also be extended to **Sami Ahmad** and **Ahmad M. Hasan** for revising the work. Great appreciation is due to **Reima Shakir** and **Naseema Mall**, our editors, under whose guidance and supervision the subject matter took form. Finally, all praise and thanks are due to Allah.

General director

Sheikh Muhammad `Abdu

Introduction

Worship and doctrine are two inseparable things because doctrine represents the theoretical aspect of Islam whereas worship represents its practical aspect. So, worship is the soul of doctrine that gives it life and the mirror that reflects its image. When a child turns his little face to his Lord and responds to His Commands he is, by this, only fulfilling and satisfying a natural instinct inside him. Dr. Sa`id al-Buti referred to this saying, "But in order to make the doctrine strongly implanted in the soul, it must be irrigated with the water of worship. Worship in its various images and shapes will make the doctrine grow and flourish in the heart and will make it stand firm in front of the hardships of life".[1]

A child is not obliged to observe the precepts of religion. Nevertheless the stage of childhood must be a stage of preparation and practice. This makes it easy for a child when reaching maturity -the age of

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1. Dr. Sa`id al-Buti,*Tajribat At-Tarbiyah Al-Islamiyyah* , p. 40.

obligation- to perform the duties and the compulsory acts of worship and he thus becomes ready to confront the troubles of life courageously and confidently. Worshiping Allah, the Almighty, does wonders with a child's soul as it makes him feel attached to Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) and it cools down his inner passions and controls his furious emotions. Added to this, inner desires at that period do not affect the child that much and that makes him even closer to Allah. Also, submissiveness is what mainly operates his body specially when he is reciting or listening to a Qur'anic verse or when praying or listening to the *Adhan* of *Iftar* (the call to prayer after which he can break his fast). Therefore, worship has an unlimited number of advantages and such advantages add to a child's strength and zeal, and for that reason the Prophetic manner of upbringing is the best methodology of all.

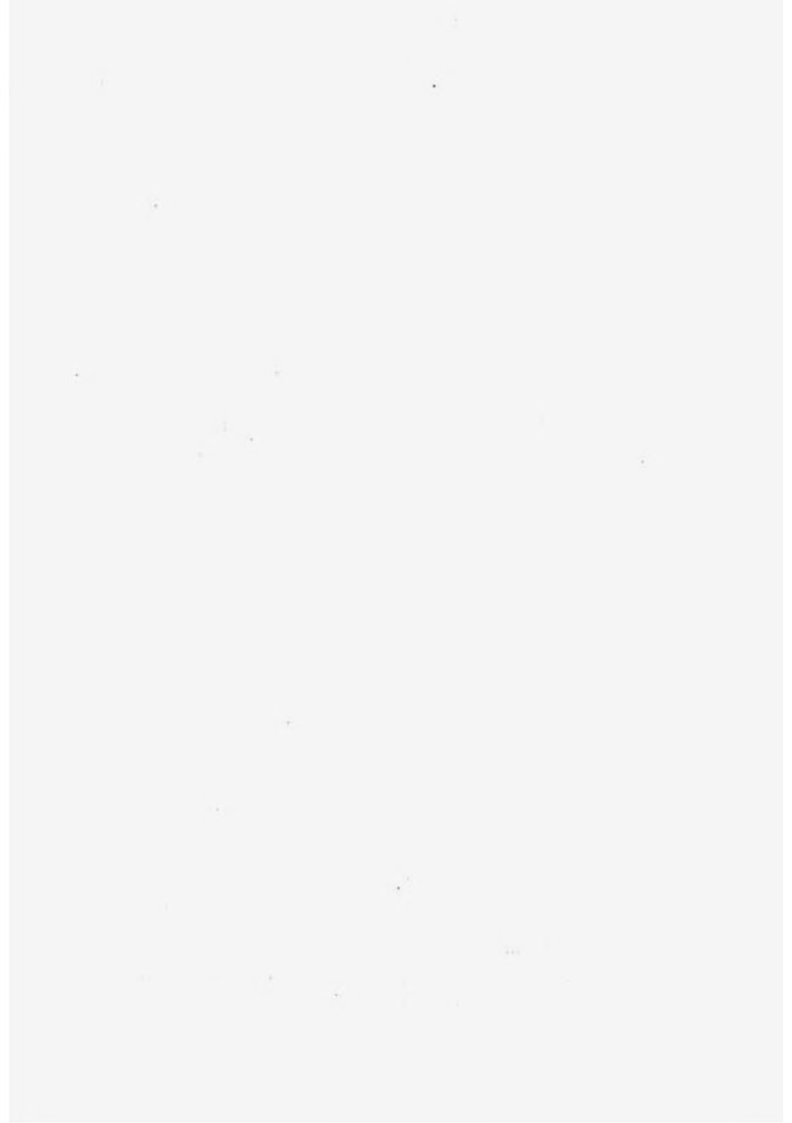
In a *hadith* of the Messenger of Allah, he (peace be upon him) speaks of the great reward that Allah bestows upon children who are raised upon the worship of Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He). Abu Umamah (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

> *"All those who grow up upon the worship of Allah and live upon it until they die, will be granted by Allah the reward of ninety nine sincere people (seekers of the truth)."*[1]

Also, `Umar ibn al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "The good deeds of the boy are counted for him whereas his bad deeds are not."[2]

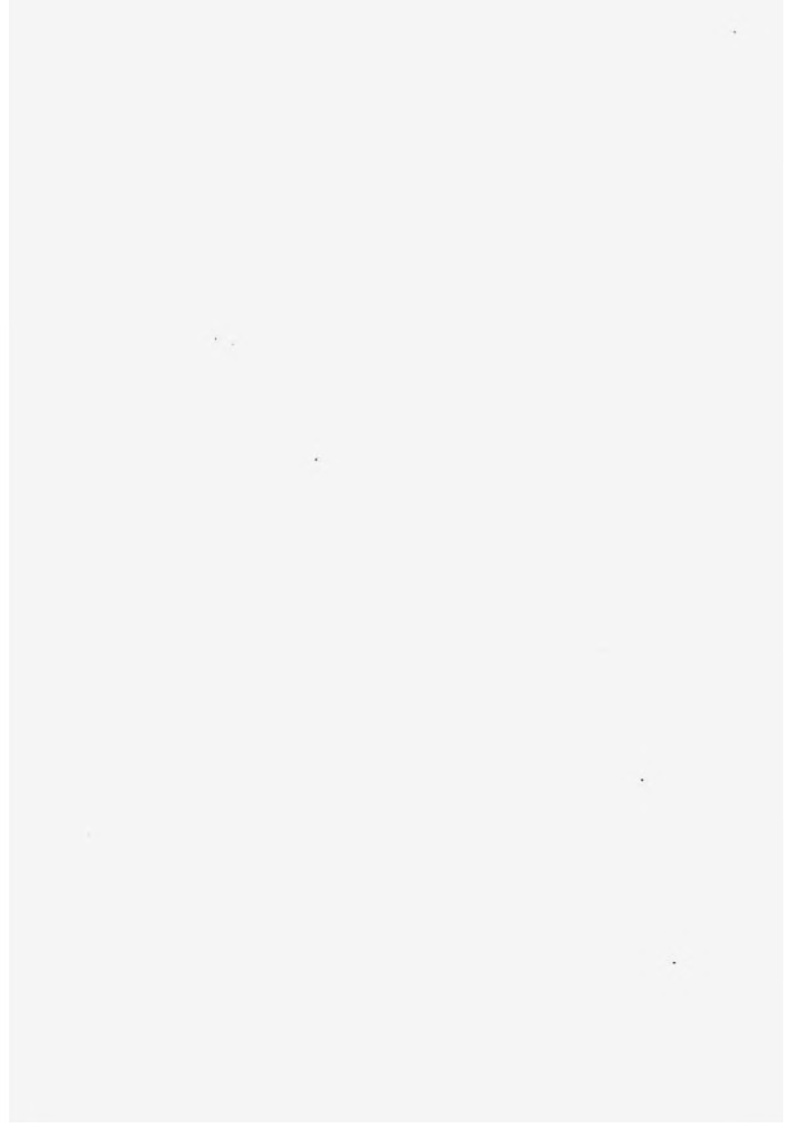
Actually, the Prophet (peace be upon him) concentrated upon five principles upon which the child's sense of worship is based and we will discuss them in detail.

1. Reported by at-Tabarani.
2. Reported by Ibn `Abd al-Barr. Ibn Farhun al-Maliki, *Fat-h Al-`Ali Al-Malik Fil Fatwa `Ala Madh-hab Al-Imam Malik* , vol. 1 p. 88.



The Principles of the Acts of Worship

- *Salah* (Prayer).
- The Child and the Mosque.
- *Siyam* (Fasting).
- *Hajj* (Pilgrimage).
- *Zakah* (Alms Giving).



The First Principle

Salah (prayer)

This principle passes through a number of stages:

1. The stage of commanding a child to perform *Salah* :

When a child starts to understand things and when he starts to know his right from his left, his parents must let him stand with them while performing *Salah*. `Abdullah ibn Habib said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, *"If the boy knew his right from his left, command him to perform Salah."*

2. The stage of teaching a child how to perform *Salah* :

The Prophet (peace be upon him) determined the age of seven as the age at which the stage of teaching (*Salah*) must start. In this stage the parents start teaching a child the basic principles of *Salah*, its duties and the acts that spoil it.

Here the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, *"Teach the boy who is seven years old Salah and beat him for it when he is ten years old."*[1] He (peace be upon him) even used to watch over the process of teaching the children the rules of *Salah* by himself and he used to correct their mistakes. Al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with them) said, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) taught me words to say in *Witr* [2], *"O Allah, guide me to the right path and let me be among those whom You have guided. Keep me in good health and let me be among those whom You have kept in good health. Support me and let me be among those whom You have supported. Bestow Your Blessing upon what You have given me and protect me from whatever evil You have predestined because You judge fairly but You are never judged and no one of those whom You support is ever humiliated. O Lord! You are Exalted and Glorified."*[3]

He (peace be upon him) also used to teach them *Adhan* (the call to prayer) and here Abu Mahdhurah said[4], "I went out with ten boys in the company of

1. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.
2. A Prayer that consists of an odd number of *Rak`ahs* that one performs before sleeping.
3. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.
4. This *Hadith* was reported in many different ways but we have chosen here the narration that fits most the educational purpose.

the Prophet (peace be upon him) when he was the most hated person to us. They called to prayer and so in a mocking way we imitated them. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, '*Bring me those boys,*' and he said, '*Perform Adhan.*' And so they did and I was one of them and here the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, '*A good one is he whom I have heard his voice, go and perform Adhan for the people of Makkah,*' and he (peace be upon him) stroked his head and said, '*Say, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest. I testify that Allah is the One and Only (twice), and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger Of Allah (twice). Come to Salah, come to Salah. Come to prosperity, come to prosperity. Allah is the Greatest, Allah is the Greatest and there is no God but Allah. And, if you performed Adhan in the morning say, 'To pray is better than to sleep, to pray is better than to sleep.' And, when you come to start Salah say twice: Salah has started, Salah has started, have you heard.*'"[1] Since then Abu Mahdhurah never shaved nor parted his hair because the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) passed his honored hand upon it once.

Before each *Salah* the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to make the children stand in the last row

and here Ibn Mas`ud said, "The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) used to stroke our shoulders and say before starting *Salah*, *'Stand on an equal footing for if you do not, your hearts will disagree. Let those who are mature stand behind me then those who are after them then those who are after them.'*"[1]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also used to command the children not to turn their faces to the right or to the left during *Salah*. This is only another proof of the importance of teaching children the manners of *Salah*. Here, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, *"O son! Be careful not to turn your face during Salah because turning the face in Salah is a ruin (on the Day of Judgment) and if you have to then do it in the supererogatory prayer not in the compulsory prayer."*[2] Through this, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) was also teaching a child the rulings of the supererogatory and compulsory acts.

The Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) then followed his example and started teaching their children by themselves. For example, there is `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) calling his

1. Reported by Muslim.
2. Reported by at-Tirmidhi.

son, al-Husayn, teaching him the manner of *Wudu'* (ablution) and answering his questions about it:

Al-Husayn ibn `Ali (may Allah be pleased with them) said, "My father, `Ali, asked me to bring him water for his *Wudu'* and so I brought it for him. He started by washing his hands three times before putting them in the water. He then rinsed his mouth three times and sniffed water into his nostrils and blew it out gently three times. Then he washed his face three times then his right arm up to his elbow three times then the left arm the same way. He then rubbed his head once and washed his right foot up to the heel three times then he did the same with the left foot. After this he stood up and asked me to give him the container in which there was the water remaining from his *Wudu'* and so I did. He drank from it and it amazed me to see him doing so. He said to me, 'Do not be amazed because I saw your grandfather, the Prophet (peace be upon him), doing the same as I have done, performing his *Wudu'* the same way and drinking the water remaining from it while standing.'"[1]

So, when a child sees an adult performing one of the rituals of religion like *Wudu'* for example, this

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.

will have a great effect upon him for he may then learn to perform it in the right way. Here Nafi` said, "When I was a boy I saw Safiyyah bint Abu `Ubayd performing *Wudu'* and when she wanted to rub her head, she removed her veil."

Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas used to teach his children the transmitted supplications as his son Mus`ab related. Mus`ab said, "Sa`d used to teach us things that he heard from the Prophet (peace be upon him) who said,

> *'O Allah! I seek Your Protection against stinginess, I seek Your Protection against cowardice, I seek Your Protection against getting too old and losing control over my mind, I seek Your Protection against the temptations of life and I seek Your Protection against the torment in the grave.'"*[1]

Finally, we shall end this stage by stating the advice addressed by the great Companion, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, to parents as he said, "Teach your children *Salah* and make them get used to performing good deeds because goodness is a habit.[2]

1. Reported by Abu Ya`la.
2. Reported by at-Tabarani.

3. The stage of commanding a child to perform *salah* and beating him if he does not:

This stage starts when a child is ten years old. If a child is observed as being careless or negligent or slackening in performing *Salah* then the parents are allowed to resort to beating. Beating in this case is considered to be a means of punishment because the child here wrongs himself by following the temptations of the devil when he is supposed to be in a state of total obedience to Allah. In the stage of childhood the devil's effect upon man is still weak and so a child is supposed to be acting according to his natural disposition upon which he was created. So, when a child does not perform *Salah* this means that the devil is gradually starting to gain control over him. That is why parents must thus appeal to the Prophetic tradition of beating the child and they may explain to him the reason for his being beaten. Then they may recite to him the following *hadith* :

`Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn al-`As (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

> *"Command your children to perform Salah when they are seven years old and beat them*

for leaving it when they are ten and separate between them in beds."[1]

Shaykh Waliyullah ad-Dahlawi comments on this *hadith* saying,

"The boy becomes mature when reaching the state of psychological stability and this is only realized by the mind. The sign of the appearance of the mind is seven because the child who is seven years old no doubt moves from one state to another explicitly. The sign of the completion of the mind is ten because the child who is ten years old, when in a good mood, is a sensible person who knows what may be of benefit or of harm to him. He may also cleverly manage commerce and its likes. Speaking about the maturity that makes him responsible for *Jihad*[2] and responsible for obeying the Divine ordinances, i.e. the maturity that transfers him to the stage of manhood where he starts to suffer from intrigues and where he starts to be taken into consideration in the religious and civil policies, it depends upon the completion of the mind and the body and it is usually reached at the age of fifteen.

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.
2. Fighting in the cause of Allah or any kind of effort to make Allah's word superior.

Signs of this kind of maturity are attaining puberty and the growth of pubic hair.

Salah has two considerations: It is considered to be a matter between a child and his Lord and it saves him from being abased to the lowest possible position in the Afterlife. He, therefore, must be commanded to perform it when he reaches discretion. It is also considered to be one of the rites of Islam for which he is responsible and which he is forced to perform whether he likes it or not, and its ruling is like the rulings of the rest of the rites. Since the age of ten is a partition between childhood and adolescence and a union between the two, it has got a share in both."[1]

4. Making children get used to attending *Salat al-Jumu`ah* (the Friday prayer):

Jabir ibn `Abdullah said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"The one who believes in Allah and in the Day of Judgment must attend Salat al-Jumu`ah unless he is a traveler, a slave, a boy, a woman, or a sick person. But the one who gives it up*

1. Ad-Dahlawi, *Hujjat Allah Al-Balighah* , vol. 1, p. 186.

for the sake of fun or for the sake of trade, Allah will give him up because Allah is Free from all wants and Worthy of all praise."[1]

Imam al-Kasani then commented on the *hadith* saying, "So the *Salah* of the boy is a voluntary *Salah*."[2]

When the boy gets used to attending *Salat al-Jumu`ah*, he achieves a number of benefits:

- When he reaches maturity he will be accustomed to performing *Salat al-Jumu`ah.*
- He will be affected by the Friday Sermon for his nature is still sensitive to receiving the speeches of faith and the biography of the Prophet (peace be upon him). It will also be an exercise for him in improving his ability to intercept knowledge later on.
- He will start to feel familiar with the Muslims' gatherings and when he gets to know his father's acquaintances he will start feeling that he is part of the society.

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.
2. *Bada'i` As-Sana'i`*, vol. 1, p.259.

- If it is true that the hour when requests are granted on Friday is during the Sermon, then he will be among those who witness this blessed hour.
- Also, attending *Salat al-Jumu`ah* will feed a child's soul with faith and will encourage him to perform the five daily prayers and to obey Allah in between the two Fridays.
- The boy will get acquainted with the scholars of the *Ummah* (the Muslim Nation) and this will have a strong influence upon him both when he is young and when he becomes old.
- Attending *Salat al-Jumu`ah* helps in building a child's personality. It helps in founding the various aspects of his character: the doctrinal, the worship, the social, the emotional, the learning, the physical, the health and the sexual.

5. Being an example for children in performing Night Prayer:

The children of the Companions were not content with just performing the five (obligatory) prayers but in addition they performed the supererogatory prayers, specially the Night Prayer. Concerning this, Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I

spent the night at the house of my aunt Maymunah bint al-Harith, the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him), when he (peace be upon him) was there too. He (peace be upon him) performed the Evening Prayer then came home and prayed four *Rak`ah*s and then he slept. He then woke up and asked, 'Has the boy slept?' or something of the sort and then he (peace be upon him) stood up. I stood on his left but he (peace be upon him) made me stand on his right and he performed five *Rak`ahs* then two then he (peace be upon him) slept and I heard his snoring. After this, he (peace be upon him) woke up and went to the mosque to perform the Morning Prayer.[1]

So, we see how this little child was so interested in following the movements of his beloved (peace be upon him) and how he preferred praying with him to sleeping at night. We also see how careful the Prophet (peace be upon him) was to let a child pray with him and how he (peace be upon him) corrected his mistakes.

Also, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that he was with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) and his mother and aunt. The Prophet (peace be upon him) prayed with them making Anas

1. Reported by al-Bukhari.

stand on his right and his mother and aunt stood behind them.[1]

One of the nice stories that leaves a person amazed at the intelligence of its young hero is the story of a dialogue that took place between the child, Abu Yazid Tayfur ibn `Isa al-Bastami and his father. Shaykh ibn Zafar al-Makki[2] said, "I heard that when Yazid Tayfur ibn `Isa al-Bastami (may Allah be pleased with him) memorized the verse, ﴿*O thou folded in garments! Stand (to Prayer) by night, but not all night.*﴾ (Al-Muzzammil: 1-2), he said to his father, 'O father! To whom is Allah the Almighty saying this?' He said, 'O son! He is addressing the Prophet, Muhammad (peace be upon him).' He said, 'O Father! Why are you not doing what the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to do?' He said, 'O son! Performing the Night Prayer was something assigned to the Prophet alone and not to the rest of his *Ummah* .' Abu Yazid kept silent but when he came to memorize the verse, ﴿*Thy Lord doth know that thou standest forth (to prayer) nigh two thirds of the night, or half the night, or a third of the night, and so doth a party of those with thee...*﴾ (Al-Muzzammil: 20), he said to

1. Reported by Ahmad.
2. Ibn Zafar al-Makki, *Anba' Nujaba' Al-Abna* ', p. 150.

his father, 'O father! I heard that a group of people used to perform the Night Prayer, who are they?' He said, 'O son! Those are the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them all). Abu Yazid said, 'O father! What goodness is there in leaving what the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Companions used to do?' He said, 'You are right my son!' And later on his father started to wake at night and pray. One night Abu Yazid woke up and found his father praying and so he said, 'O father! Teach me how to perform *Wudu'* to pray with you.' His father said, 'O son! Go and sleep for you are still young.' Abu Yazid said, 'O father! If the day when men will proceed in companies sorted out to be shown their deeds, shall I say to my Lord that I asked my father to teach me *Wudu'* to pray with him but he refused and told me to go and sleep because I am still young, would you like me to say so?' The father said, 'No son, by Allah I would not like you to say so.' After this he taught him and since then Abu Yazid used to pray with his father."

6. Making children get used to performing *Salat Al-Istikharah* (the prayer where one seeks the advice of Allah):

Ibn as-Sani[1] related that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"O Anas! If you are about to do something, perform Salat al-Istikharah seven times then see what reaches your heart first, for goodness will be in it."*

7. Taking children to perform *Salat Al-`Id* (The feast prayer):

`Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to go out in the two feasts to perform *Salah* and with him used to go al-Fadl ibn al-`Abbas, `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, al-`Abbas, `Ali, Ja`far, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Usamah ibn Zayd, Zayd ibn Harithah and Ayman ibn Umm Ayman. The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to praise Allah all the way to the mosque and he used to take the way of *al-Haddadin* until reaching the mosque. After finishing *Salah*, he (peace be upon him) used to pass by *al-Hadhdha'in* until reaching his home.[2]

1. Ibn as-Sani, *`Amal Al-Yawm Wal Laylah* .
2. Reported by Ibn Khuzaymah.

The Second Principle

The Child and the Mosque

1. Taking a child to the mosque:

The mosque is the great place from which great successive generations always emerge. It was and is still the source of generations ready to dedicate themselves to their Lord, to submit to His Commands and to follow the example of His Messenger. That was why children of the Companions were always keen to perform *Salah* with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the mosque. For example, here is Jabir ibn Samrah telling us about his childhood and his companionship with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him).

Jabir ibn Samrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "I prayed along with Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) the first Prayer (i.e. the Noon Prayer). He then went to his family and I also went

along with him. When he met some children (on the way), he began to pat the cheeks of each one of them. He also patted my cheek and I experienced a coolness or a fragrance of his hand as if it had been brought out from the scent bag of a perfumer."[1]

However, a child must be taken to the mosque only when he is able to go to the bathroom and clean himself all alone and when he stops urinating and defecating on himself. He must also be taught the manners of the mosque before being taken there and these manners are: entering quietly, putting the shoes in its place and folding it upon itself while walking, not shoving those who are older, paying attention to the sermon or to the lesson and concentrating in *Salah*, and avoiding making a fuss.

Imam Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) was once asked whether it is liked or not if a man comes to the mosque and brings his boy with him. He said, "If the boy is old enough to be polite and not to make a fuss then I think it is all right. But, if the boy is too young to stay still and keep silent then I think it would better that he does not come."[2]

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1. Reported by Muslim.
2. See "*At-Tarbiyah Fi Al-Islam* ", the verification of Dr. Ahmad al-Ahwani, p. 282.

Another proof that taking children to perform *Salah* in the mosque is allowed is the Prophet's words addressed to the *Imams* of the mosques. He (peace be upon him) told them not to prolong *Salah* for the sake of children.

`Uqbah ibn `Amr al-Badri (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "A man came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, 'I come late to the Morning Prayer because of so-and-so who prolongs *Salah* . Hearing this, the Prophet (peace be upon him) got angry in a way I have never seen and he delivered a sermon,

> *'O you people! Some of you are repulsive. If any one of you comes to lead people in Salah then let him be brief because behind him stand the old, the young, and those who want to relieve nature.'"*[1]

Again, here we see a child participating in maintaining the number of *Rak`ahs* by his praying in the mosque. Ibrahim ibn Suwayd said, "`Alqamah led us in the Noon Prayer and he performed five *Rak`ahs*. So, when he finished *Salah* the people said, 'O Abu Shebl! You performed five *Rak`ahs*.' But he said, 'No, I did not.' They said, 'Yes, you did.' I was on the people's side and I was still a boy and I

1. Reported by al-Bukhari.

said, 'Yes, you performed five *Rak`ahs* .' `Alqamah thus said to me, 'You too say the same thing?' I said, 'Yes and so he went and prostrated twice then he sealed *Salah.*' `Abdullah then said, 'The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) led us in *Salah* and he performed five *Rak`ahs* and so when he (peaee be upon him) finished, people started whispering to eaeh other.' He said, 'What is the matter with you?' They said, 'O Messenger of Allah! Has the Prayer been extended?' He (peace be upon him) said, 'No.' They said, 'You performed five *Rak`ahs* . Thus, the Prophet (peaee be upon him) went and prostrated twiee and then he sealed *Salah* and said, *'I am only a human being like you and so I forget as you forget.''*[1]

How should children stand with men while performing *Salah* in congregation?

Abu Malik al-Ash`ari said that the Prophet (peaee be upon him) used to divide the time equally between the *Rak`ahs* of *Salah* but he (peace be upon him) always made the first *Rak`ah* the longest in order to give the people a chance to catch up with him. He also used to make men stand in front of boys and the women behind the boys.[2]

1. Reported by Muslim.
2. Reported by Ahmad.

Abu Malik also said, "Shall I tell you about the *Salah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him)?" He then started the *Salah* making the men stand in rows and making the boys stand behind them in rows and then he prayed.[1]

In addition to this Anas said, "One night an orphan and I offered the Prayers behind the Prophet in my house and my mother (Umm Sulaym) was standing behind us (by herself forming a row)."[2]

Ibn Mas`ud said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "*Let those of you who are sedate and prudent be near me, then those who are next to them, then those who are next to them and do not disagree lest your hearts fall into dissension. And, beware of the tumult of the markets.*"[3]

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said, "I prayed with the Prophet (peace be upon him) and `A'ishah was behind us and I was beside the Prophet (peace be upon him) praying with him."[4]

1. Reported by Abu Dawud.
2. Reported by al-Bukhari.
3. Reported by al-Hakim.
4. Reported by Ibn Khuzaymah.

2. Making a child feel attached to the mosque:

The view that emphasizes the importance of making a child feel attached to the mosque is a sound view. It is indispensable because it is the way for saving children, those young buds, from the claws of corruption.[1]

These words are further more confirmed by events carved in the pages of history. There is for example the ordeal that Tunisia and the rest of North Africa had gone through, an ordeal that was caused by the ruler there who claimed divinity. The Islamic countries, in this area, were threatened by such deviated ideas that if they had been applied, ruin would have been the only result. However, by the help of Allah, Mehrez ibn Khalaf as-Siddiqi, the righteous educator (d. 413 A.H.), played an important role in overcoming this ordeal. He started teaching children in some mosques with one purpose in his mind, that was to constitute children's personalities upon the Islamic basis. In other words he worked hard to make children love Islam. This

1. From the speech of Shaykh Muhammad ash-Shadhli in the conference, "The Mission of the Mosque" in Makkah (1395 A.H. / 1975 A.C.). See "*Mu'tamar Buhuth.*" *Risalat Al-Masjid* (the Mission of the Mosque), p. 446.

same meaning was referred to by Abu `Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani in his famous book, *Risalat ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawani,* that was of great benefit to Islam.

He said in its introduction, "Now then: May Allah help you and us preserve His Trust and maintain His Laws. You have asked me to write you a brief summary of the duties of religion that are uttered by the tongue, believed by the heart and performed by the organs and the importance of teaching it to children just as you teach them the letters of Qur'an. In this way, their hearts will be filled with the religion of Allah and His Laws which is a blessing for them and a guarantee of a good ending. And, finally I answered your request hoping that you and I may attain the reward of teaching Allah's religion and advocating it.

You must know that the best of hearts, the hearts that can retain more goodness and that aspire for it, are the hearts that have not been touched by evil. You must also know that the most important thing for the sincere advisers was filling the hearts of the believers' children with goodness and making it deeply rooted in their souls and making those children aware of the features of religion and the

limitations of Islam so that they may be brought up upon such principles."

And, if we knew that teaching children in the mosque is allowed only if it is for free, as Sheikh Anwar ak-Kashmiri said,[1] then we would realize that the mosque which taught the children of the Companions and the pious ancestors is still capable of teaching and producing their likes if the parents play their role correctly and direct their children towards it and make them love and appreciate it.

Also, adults must be aware of their duties towards children who come to the mosque. For example, they must adopt kindness and gentleness when advising them. They must also treat them with lenience and must show affection and sympathy for them. This in (its) turn will make going to the mosque and attending lessons something enjoyable for a child. However, unfortunately we saw many examples of adults who were so repulsive in their treatment and who were the cause of the deviation of many children because of yelling at them and kicking them out of mosques. This is no doubt one of the great calamities of this *Ummah*.

1. *Fayd Al-Bari Fi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari.*

The Third Principle

Siyam (Fasting)

Siyam is the kind of worship that is physical and spiritual at the same time. *Siyam* teaches a child very important principles, for example, learning to be truly loyal to Allah, the Almighty, and learning to watch Him in his secret acts. In addition to this, a child acquires strong will because while fasting he can manage to keep away from eating and drinking despite his feeling of hunger and thirst.

Siyam also helps a child control his desires. It makes him acquire patience and perseverance and that was why the Companions raised their children upon the worship of *Siyam*. Furthermore, *Imam* al-Bukhari wrote a chapter in his *Sahih* under the title, "*Siyam* of the Boy" where he mentioned the words of `Umar when he said to Nashwan, who was not fasting in Ramadan, "Woe unto you when our boys are fasting!" and he beat him.

Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar commented on this saying, "Chapter: *Siyam* of Boys, i.e. is it allowed in the Islamic Law or not? The majority of the Muslim scholars see that it is not obligatory upon those who have not reached puberty yet, however a number of the ancestors, among them are ibn Sirin and az-Zuhri, prefer *Siyam* of boys. Ash-Shafi`i supports the second opinion saying that children must be commanded to fast in order to practice *Siyam* so long as they can bear it. He, furthermore, says that his observing of *Siyam* must be done at the age of seven and ten just like in the case of *Salah*. However, Ishaq says that it must be done at the age of twelve and Ahmad says at the age of ten. Al-Awza`i said, "If the boy can bear *Siyam* for three successive days without being weak then he must be ordered to fast." The majority of scholars support the first opinion that states that boys are not obliged to fast. Commenting on this, al-Bukhari mentioned in the beginning of his book a story about `Umar. This story relates `Umar's situation regarding the man who was not fasting in Ramadan and how he reprimanded him saying, "How can you not fast when our boys are fasting?" Ibn Majishun went further saying, "If the boys are able to bear *Siyam*

then it is an obligation on them and so if they did not fast without an excuse, they must make up for it."[1]

The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) used to make toys for their children to play with while fasting so as not to feel the length of *Siyam.*

Ar-Rubayyi` bint Mu`awwidh said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) sent a message to the villages of al-Ansar on the morning of *`Ashura'* (the tenth of Muharram) saying, "*Whoever has eaten, should not eat any more, but fast, and who has not eaten should not eat, but complete his fast (till the end of the day).*[2] So we used to fast on this day since then and we used to make our young boys fast it. When going to the mosque, we used to make them toys from wool so that if any of them cried for food, we would give him the toy to play with until the time for breaking *Siyam* .

Commenting on this al-Hafiz ibn Hajar said,[3] "This is proof that it is permissible to make boys practice *Siyam* because at this age there is no obligation upon a boy to fast. It is only for practice."

1. See: "*Fat-h Al-Bari Fi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari* . "
2. Reported by al-Bukhari and Muslim.
3. See: "*Fat-h Al-Bari Fi Sharh Sahih Al-Bukhari* ."

The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) used to gather their children and invoke Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) at the moment of breaking the fast in the hope that their invocation might be granted in such a blessed moment.

In addition to this *I`tikaf* (spending some time in the mosque for the sake of worship) of a sensible boy is allowed in the last ten days of Ramadan because reaching puberty is not a condition for its validity.

The Fourth Principle

Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Al-Hafiz ibn Hajar said that ibn Battal said, "*Imams* who deliver formal legal opinions have unanimously agreed that a boy is not obliged to perform *Hajj* until he reaches puberty unless he is taken with someone and here it will be counted for him as a voluntary act as decided by the majority of scholars."[1]

Since *Hajj* is a form of worship just like *Siyam* and *Salah*, a child must be acquainted with it. This way he will get used to bonding with Allah, the Almighty, and he will learn to be submissive to His Commands. It will also make the child feel familiar with the idea of being obliged to observe the precepts of religion, the responsibility that awaits

1. See: "*Al-Fat-h* ," vol. 4, p. 442, and "*Badhl Al-Majhud* ," vol. 8, p. 319.

him when reaehing puberty, and thus he will not find it diffieult later on to be held responsible for sueh forms of worship.

In addition to this, *Hajj* is known to eombine all of the hardships of worship and all of its pleasures at the same time, thus having the boy performing it when still young is a good sign of his becoming pious when growing up.

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said, "Onee I eame riding a she-ass and had (just) reaehed the age of puberty. Allah's Messenger (peaee be upon him) was offering the Prayer at Mina. There was no wall in front of him and I passed in front of some of those standing in a row while they were offering their Prayers. There, I let the she-ass loose to graze and entered the row, and nobody objeeted to what I had done."[1]

Also, Usamah ibn Zayd said, "I was behind the Prophet (peaee be upon him) in `Arafah."[2]

Nevertheless, when the child reaches puberty, he will be responsible for performing *Hajj* even if he had performed it before simply because what a ehild

1. Reported by al-Bukhari.
2. Reported by al-Hakim.

does before maturity is considered to be a voluntary act. Here Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

> *"If a boy performs Hajj, it will be counted for him until he reaches puberty and when he reaches puberty he will have to perform it once again."*[1]

We see the Prophet (peace be upon him) teaching children, in an impressive touching speech during the performance of the rituals of *Hajj*, the importance of the Day of `Arafah. Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, *"O nephew! In this day (the Day of `Arafah) the one who controls his hearing, his sight, and his tongue will be forgiven."*[2]

A Juridical Commentary:

1- *Imam* al-Kasani, al-Hanafi, said in *Al-Bada'i`* ,

"If a boy performs *Ihram* (entering the state of ritual consecration) then reached puberty before standing on `Arafah, we consider it a voluntary *Hajj*

1. Reported by al-Hakim.
2. Reported by *Imam* Ahmad.

in case he continued with his *Ihram.* However ash-Shafi`i considers it a *Hajj* of Islam. In other words, we see that if a boy has intended his *Hajj* to be a supererogatory one then it is counted to be so but ash-Shafi`i sees that it is counted as a *Hajj* of Islam. Also, we see that if a boy renews his *Ihram* then stood on `Arafah and performed *Tawaf az-Ziyarah* (the visiting circumambulation) intending it to be a *Hajj* of Islam, then it will be counted to be so no doubt."

2- About the rituals of *Hajj Imam* ash-Shfi`i said,

"Owing to the Grace of Allah (Exalted and Glorified be He) He multiplied His reward for people for their performance of good deeds. Allah also bestowed His Blessing upon the believers by making their descendants join them in Paradise for He says, ﴿... *To them shall We join their families: nor shall We deprive them (of the fruit) of aught of their works...*﴾ (At-Tur: 21) So, if Allah bestows His Blessing upon the descendants of the believers by making them enter Paradise without regarding their deeds, will He not bestow His Blessing upon them by accepting their *Hajj* when they are not yet obliged to perform it!"[1]

1. Al-Bayhaqi, *Al-I`tiqad*, p. 76.

What was mentioned about *Hajj* of the companions' children:

Ibn `Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) met a cavalcade at ar-Rawha'[1] and asked who they were. They replied that they were Muslims. They asked, "Who are you?" He (peace be upon him) said, "*(I am) the Messenger of Allah.*" A woman (then) lifted up a boy to him and said, "Would this child be credited with having performed the *Hajj* ?" Thereupon, he (peace be upon him) said, "*Yes, and you will have a reward.*"[2]

As-Sa'ib ibn Yazid (may Allah be pleased with him) said, "(While in the company of my parents) I was made to perform *Hajj* with Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him) and I was a seven-year-old boy by then."[3]

Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said,

1. A place near Madinah.
2. Reported by Muslim.
3. Reported by Ahmad.

> *"Jihad of the old, the young, the weak, and women is Hajj and `Umrah (the minor Pilgrimage)."*[1]

Ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said that a boy came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "I want to perform *Hajj.*" He (peace be upon him) walked with that boy and said, *"O boy! May Allah provide you with piety and may He direct you to goodness and may He protect you from grief."* Then when the boy returned to the Prophet (peace be upon him) he said, *"O boy! Allah has accepted your Hajj and has forgiven your sin and has made up for your expenses."*[2]

This shows how much the Prophet (peace be upon him) was concerned with teaching children this important part of worship, *Hajj*, and that is because *Hajj* is one of the principles of worship.

Coming to the last question: If a boy makes a mistake while performing the rituals of *Hajj*, is there *Kaffarah* (an atonement) for him?

Yahya ibn Muhammad said, explaining the opinion of Abu Hanifah, that if the boy commits one of the prohibited things of *Ihram*, there is no *Kaffarah* on him.

1. Reported by an-Nasa'i.
2. Reported by Ibn as-Sani.

The Fifth Principle

Zakah (Alms Giving)

The grandfather of `Amr ibn Shu`ayb said that a woman came to the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) with her daughter. Her daughter was wearing two thick golden bracelets, so he (peace be upon him) said,

> *"Are you giving out Zakah for this?" she said, "No." He (peace be upon him) said, "Would you like Allah make you wear in their place two bracelets of fire in the Day of Judgment?" Immediately, she took them off and gave them to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, "They are for Allah and His Messenger."*[1]

As for *Zakat al-Fitr* (the alms tax paid in Ramadan) `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) said that Allah's Messenger

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1. Reported by Abu Dawud.

made it incumbent on all the slave or free Muslims, male or female, to pay one *Sa`* (about three kilograms) of dates or barley as *Zakat al-Fitr.*[1]

Making *Zakah* an obligation on Muslims and an important principle of worship is only proof that Islam is concerned with sustaining the purity of Muslims' properties. In this context, Almighty Allah says,

> ﴿*Of their goods take alms, that so thou mightest purify and sanctify them...*﴾
>
> (At-Tawbah: 103)

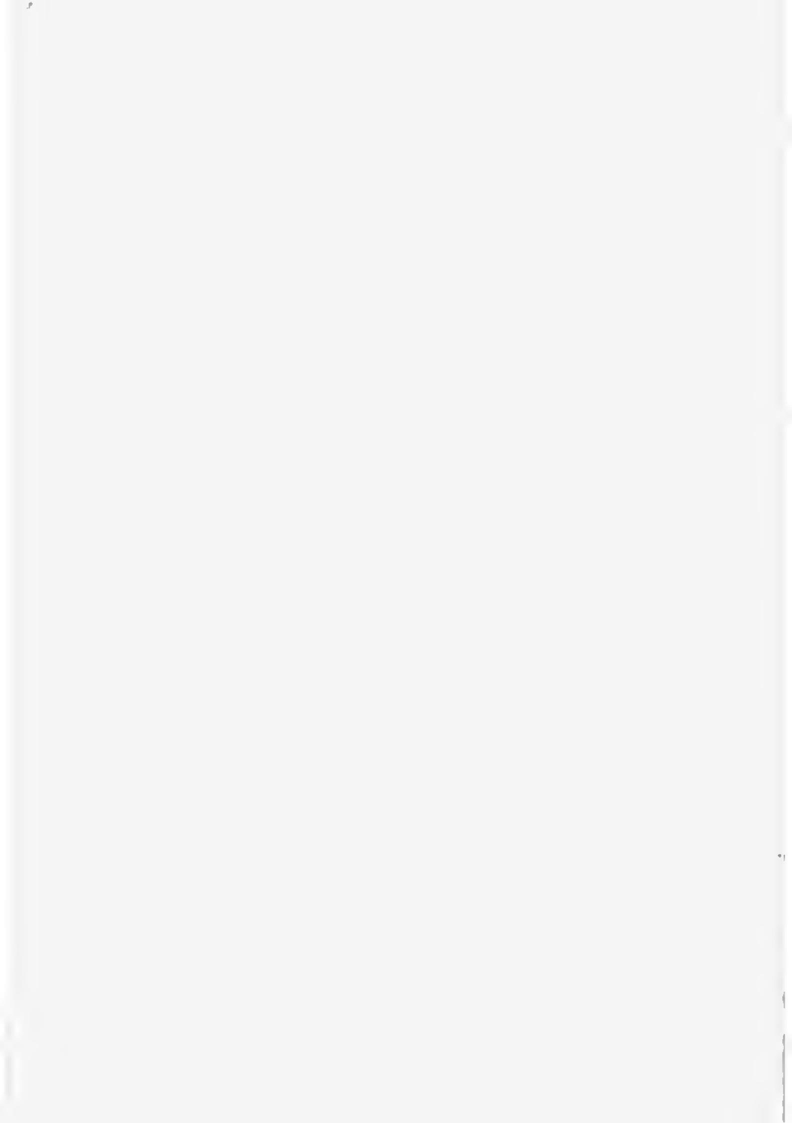
1. Reported by al-Bukhari.

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